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PATENT APPLICATION
Serial No. 10/016,241
Atty. Docket No. 388-011839

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Group Art Unit 2161

In re application of

Fujiwara YOSHIYASU

Serial No. 10/016,241

Filed October 31, 2001

Examiner – Not Yet Assigned

METHOD OF SUPPORTING
SALES AND MAINTENANCE OF
STEAM TRAPS AND
AGGREGATING SYSTEM FOR
USE IN THE METHOD

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
March 14, 2002

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

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Technology Center 2100

Sir:

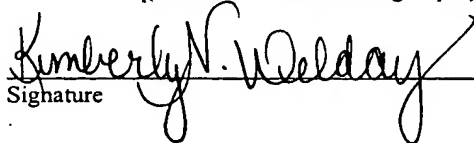
Pursuant to the requirements of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.56, 1.97 and 1.98, Applicant hereby submits this Information Disclosure Statement, which includes a completed Form PTO-1449 and one copy of each reference identified therein.

With respect to reference JP 6-14381, an English language description of the claim is attached hereto. This reference is relevant for the reasons cited on page 1 of the specification of the present application. With respect to reference JP 9-54841, an English language description of the relevant portion, the front page is attached hereto. With respect

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on March 14, 2002.

Kimberly N. Welday

(Name of Person Mailing Paper)


Signature

03/14/2002
Date


to reference JP 8-329147, an English language description of the relevant portion, the front page, is attached hereto. With respect to reference JP 9-6847, an English language description of the relevant portion, page 4, line 46 through page 5, line 7 is attached hereto. With respect to reference JP 6-241956, an English language description of the relevant portion, page 4, left column, lines 44-50, is attached hereto.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)(3), no fee is believed to be due for the submission of this Information Disclosure Statement, as it is being submitted before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits. However, should an Office Action on the merits issue prior to the mailing date of this Information Disclosure Statement, the Commissioner of Patents is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to Deposit Account No. 23-0650. One (1) original and two (2) copies of this Information Disclosure Statement are enclosed.

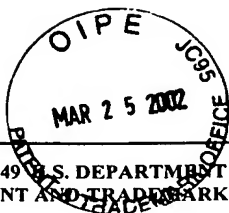
Respectfully submitted,

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Sheet 1 of 1

FORM PTO-1449 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Use several sheets if necessary)	ATTY. DOCKET NO. 388-000958	SERIAL NO. 10/016,241
	APPLICANT(S) Fujiwara YOSHIYASU	
	FILING DATE October 31, 2001	GROUP Art Unit 2161

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

EXAMINER INITIAL	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
AA						
AB						
AC						
AD						
AE						
AF						
AG						
AH						
AI						
AJ						
AK						

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FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	TRANSLATION	
						YES	NO
AL	6 1 4 3 8 1	02/23/1994	Japan	G07C3	02	Partial Summary	
AM	9 5 4 8 4 1	02/25/1997	Japan	G07C3	02	Partial Summary	
AN	8 3 2 9 1 4 7	12/13/1996	Japan	G06F17	60	Partial Summary	
AO	9 6 8 4 7	01/10/1997	Japan	G06F17	60	Partial Summary	
AP	6 2 4 1 9 5 6	09/02/1994	Japan	G01M19	00	Partial Summary	

OTHER DOCUMENTS (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)

AQ	
AR	
AS	

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

EXAMINER: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.



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Summary of the Art described in the References

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- 1 Japanese patent application 'kokoku' No. Hei. 6-14381

This reference 1 discloses, as described in its claim,:

An automatic aggregating-analyzing apparatus for steam leak data concerning a plurality of steam traps, comprising:

a steam leak amount detector for detecting presence/absence of steam leak from each individual steam trap and the amount of such steam leak if any;

storing means for storing the detected presence/absence of steam leak and detected amount of steam leak; and

a host computer for receiving the stored data and recording and displaying aggregation analysis relating to the total of the steam leak amounts from all the steam traps, the monetary converted value of the steam leak, the ratio of defective traps, etc. as well as time-associated condition change in each individual steam trap.

2. Japanese patent application 'kokai' No. Hei. 9-54841

This reference 2 discloses, as described in its front page,:

A construction comprising:

a leak amount detector (2) for detecting the amount of steam leak from a steam trap (1);

converting means (4) for converting leak amount data outputted from the leak amount detector (2) into a monetary loss amount corresponding thereto;

storing means (5) for storing the monetary loss amount converted by the converting means (4) for each date of the detection;

inputting means (6) for inputting a cost required for

maintenance/replacement of the steam trap (1);

a microprocessor (3) (calculating means) for effecting a regression operation on the monetary loss amount stored at the storing means (5) for comparison with the maintenance/replacement cost inputted to the inputting means (6) so as to predict a timing of maintenance/replacement; and

displaying means (7) for displaying the maintenance/replacement timing predicted by the microprocessor (3).

3. Japanese patent application 'kokai' No. Hei. 8-329147

This reference 3 discloses, as described in its front page,:

A construction wherein:

degrees of consumption of components stored at important consumables master file (22) are calculated, based on a travel distance and an initial registration year and date inputted through an inputting means (1);

a component(s) whose calculated degree of consumption exceeds a threshold is included as a component-to-be-replaced in an estimated cost; and

an estimating unit (3) produces an estimation statement and outputs it from an outputting means (4).

4. Japanese patent application 'kokai' No. Hei. 9-6847

This reference 4 discloses, as described at page 4, line 47 through page 5, line 7, a construction as follows.

When a fault diagnosis reveals that a defective part is an expensive part essential for a gas appliance or a deteriorated part whose deterioration has been extended over a large area as a result of long-term use, this means that its repair is impossible or costly,

hence requiring purchase of a new gas appliance for replacement. In such case, the construction allows instant retrieval of data from a host computer 11 via a fault diagnostic device 3 used for the diagnosis on the site of the repair/maintenance for on-the-site presentation to the user, which data are necessary for sales promotion of the new gas appliance, such as data concerning the specifications of the new gas appliance, estimated cost of replacement, gas piping system, gas meter installed site, the construction of the room where the appliance is to be installed, etc.

5. Japanese patent application 'kokai' No. Hei. 6-241956

This reference 5 discloses, as described at page 4, left column, lines 44 through 50, a following construction.

Conditions repercussion data inferred by using quantities of conditions measured in a plant are inputted to a risk evaluating means 3, which produces an evaluated risk value. If this evaluated risk value exceeds a safety level threshold for the plant, an abnormality cause classification determining means 42 classifies the cause of the abnormality found, and a corresponding group of abnormality disposition alternatives grouped according to an abnormality causes classification are read out from an abnormality disposition alternatives database 43 which stores groups of such alternatives in advance.